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marked in Zedner's Catalogue (p. 335) with the words "No other copy known." We have thus at present two copies of this rare work. There occurs also a curious statement in the Hebrew preface, which is worth pointing out here, though it was already referred to by Steinschneider. Apologising for his rendering special Jewish matters into a profane language, the author says that "already, many years before, somebody has translated many Ritual Laws from the *Turim* into a secular language (לע"ז), of which copies were sent to the Marannos, in Flanders (פלאנדיש)

. . . . And as I have also heard that in England (or Angleteria באינגל טירה) *the Gentiles are now printing the Talmud in Latin*, and we also know that most (Hebrew) books which are now printed in Italy are carried away to Padua, Paris, and Salamanca, and other Gentile places, both books on the Law and commentaries, not to speak of Cabbalistic books."

I am unable to tell on what facts this rumour about the translation of the Talmud in England as early as 1568 could have been founded; all the great Hebraists we know of, as Selden, Pocock, etc., belonged to the seventeenth century. But I hope this note may be read by some specialist, who will set us on the right clue.

S. SCHECHTER.

"**Bestemm.**"—The Jewish-German jargon is a museum of curiosities and antiquities gathered from all lands and seas. As a conqueror leaves behind him in the ground coins which mark his devastating track, so the various civilisations have left their impress on the Jewish intellectual life and its popular language. And thus the history which a word has to tell us is, frequently, a more faithful and persistent memorial than stones and documents. Such a record of a sorrowful portion of Jewish history I discovered in a Jewish-German term, whose original home, though one would hardly credit it, was Venice. Any one desirous of cursing heartily in the jargon employs a single word to express all kinds of suffering and trouble—Bestemm. This term is used as a noun, and occurs in the phrase "to give one Bestemm," which expresses the intensest exasperation.

It is the old word for Blasphemia and Blasphemiare, which appear in the disguised form Bestemmia and Bestemmiare. The form "blastemare" was the intermediate stage through which the word passed before it reached its present form. On an ancient Christian window in the Netherlands we find under a representation of Job Blaspheming, the words IOB BLASTEMA.¹ From this *Bestemmia* is but a single step. Our business here, however, is not to trace the well-known etymology of the word, but rather to show the way through which it passed into the Jewish popular dialect. That way leads us to Venice, where a judicial Court existed, with the special function of trying cases of Bestemmia. It did not always confine itself to the examination of real charges of blasphemy.² Every one is aware of the alarming proportions which the system of denunciation attained at Venice. Nothing was easier than to be summoned before this tribunal, whose cruel methods of examination

¹ See Fr. H. Kraus, *Roma Sotteranea*, 289, 5.

² See *Hebraische Bibliographie* VI., page 65, note 4.

and terrible punishments had become so familiar to the people that it gave the Jews a term to express torment and torture.

If the word Ghetto, which has passed into all languages, is a memorial of the Cannon foundry of Venice, the Jewish-German *Bestemm* perpetuates the memory of a Venetian magistracy long since defunct. A slight and yet sufficient proof of the enduring character of that race which has reared monuments to its oppressors, and revives memories of institutions which the waves of time have long swept away into oblivion.

DAVID KAUFMANN.

Algazi's Chronicle and the names of Patriarchs' Wives.—

תולדות אדם is the title of a small and rather rare volume, by R. Samuel Algazi, containing, among other things, a chronological sketch from the Creation to the year 1583, in which the author wrote his work. As the whole space given to this sketch does not exceed the space of ten pages (in small octavo), no one will expect its author to bring forward many fresh and new points; and Dr. Steinschneider is quite right in pronouncing it as a mere extract from an older chronicle, and of no importance. (See his Catalogue, p. 2,403.) One point, however, in "Algazi's Chronicle" seems to be new and worthy of notice. It is the enumeration of the names of the wives of Biblical personages, of which Algazi's predecessors, as far as we possess their works, know little or nothing. These names, given in pp. 1 and 2, run as follows:—

The wife of Seth, עזורה; of Enosh, נועם; of Kenan, מהוללאות; of Mahalalel, דינה; of Jared, ברכיה בת רצויה; of Enoch, ערנה בת דניאל; of Methuselah, ערנה בת עזריה; of Lamech, ברונוש בת ברכאל; of Noah, רצויה בת; of Shem, אמורע בת ברכיאל; of Arpachshad, מוחלה בת בנו; of Shelah, ששון; of Eber, עזורה בת נמרוד; of Peleg, מלכה בת מרי; of Reu, לבנה בת שוער; of Serug, נהר; of Nahor, ערנה בת אברנהו; of Terah, ישנב בת ישחוב.

This list, which agrees more or less with the Book of Jubilees, chapters iv.-viii., is the most complete in Hebrew literature. Perles, in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der hebräischen und aramäischen Studien* (p. 90), gives another list of these names from the margin of a certain MS. in Munich. But it is much more corrupt and shorter than Algazi's. Algazi must, therefore, either have made use of some Hebrew work, since then lost, or, less probably, of some non-Jewish source.

S. SCHECHTER.